CHAPTER 13

PLANNING, NEW TOWNS, AND NEW URBANISM

Let there be one man who has a city obedient to his will, and he might bring into existence the ideal polity about which the world is so incredulous.

—Plato, *The Republic*

OUTLINE

Introduction
- Ancient Greece and Rome
- Renaissance and Later Developments

American Planning
- Washington, DC
- Nineteenth-Century Towns
- Early Planned Communities
- Parks
- The City Beautiful Movement
- Tenement Reform

Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Patterns
- The City Efficient
- Zoning and Beyond
- Master Plans to Equity Planning
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

European Planning
- Planning and Control of Land
- Housing Priorities
- Transportation
- Urban Growth Policies
- The Dutch Approach

New Towns
- British New Towns
- New Towns in Europe

American New Towns
- Public-Built New Towns
- Federal Support for New Towns
- Private New Towns: Reston, Columbia, and Irvine
- Research Parks

New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Developments
- Celebration
- Creating Community
- Limitations

Summary

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses urban planning in different eras and various forms. new towns and the New Urbanism are given particular attention. Remember to read this chapter not as a distinct unit, but as part of a larger explanation of urban process. Note how our discussion of Roman and Renaissance planning ties in with

Chapter 2: The Emergence of Cities, while coverage of the American planning experience continues the discussion in Part II: American Urbanization.

Urban planning is not a new development. The Bible, in Genesis 11:4, tells of one of the earliest attempts at urban planning:

> And they said, "Come let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." (ASV)

As we all know, the Tower of Babel was not successful as a form of urban planning in spite of the fact that it did have full citizen participation. The hope is that some of our more modest contemporary attempts will be more successful.

ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME

Ancient cities, as indicated in Chapter 2: The Emergence of Cities, were rarely based on a plan or even a general concept of what the city should be. The Greeks, who appreciated organization and structure in other aspects of their lives, gave little attention to the physical arrangement of their communities. In classical Greek cities, the main thoroughfares were generally planned as processional avenues, but residential development was undisciplined and chaotic. Rhodes, with its avenues radiating from a center, was something of an exception. What planning did take place was limited to the central municipal area which contained the principal monuments, temples, and stately edifices.

Aristotle tells us that Hippodamus of Miletus, who lived in the fifth century BC, was the first city planner. According to Aristotle, in planning Athens' port city of Piraeus:

> He planned a city with a population of 10,000 divided into three parts, one of the skilled workers, one of farmers, and one to defend the state. The land was divided into three parts: sacred, public, and private, supporting in turn the worship of the gods, the defense of the state, and the farm owners.[1]

Note that provision was made for farming within the city walls, a very necessary consideration during periods when the city was under siege.

The Romans were somewhat more successful than the Greeks at planning their towns. But as discussed in Chapter 2, beyond the city center Rome showed very limited evidence of planning. However, provincial Roman towns, with their central square and gridiron layout, established a model that still can be seen in most American cities today. That Roman provincial cities (and our football fields) were modeled after the gridiron pattern of encampment used by the Roman legions is not surprising since much of provincial Roman town planning was done by military engineers. It has been said that these outpost towns were so similar that if a Roman centurion were dropped in the middle of any one of them, he could not tell which town he was in.

The largest of the planned Roman cities was Constantinople, the "Rome of the East," which the emperor Constantine built to glorify his reign and escape the fate of previous emperors at the hands of Roman mobs.

RENAISSANCE AND LATER DEVELOPMENTS

The fall of the Roman Empire in the West meant the death of Western urban planning for virtually a millennium. The Renaissance (fourteenth to sixteenth centuries) revived planning in cities. Star-shaped models were especially popular; in 1593 Vincenzo Scamozzi actually built a small city, Palma Nova, in the shape of a nine-pointed star.

Planners in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries often designed stylized and static artificial communities. Geometric form rather than naturalness was the goal. The epitome of symmetrical perfection was Versailles, the magnificent home of the French kings, whose gardens, palaces, and town were planned as a unit.

The English also made attempts, largely unsuccessful, at town planning. In 1580 Queen Elizabeth proclaimed restrictions on London's growth that were designed to give the city a green belt of open land and thus prevent crowding and poverty.[2] This policy—which foreshadowed the twentieth-century green belt towns discussed later in this chapter—failed, although it was backed by royal statute. Probably the most noteworthy master plan was that designed by Christopher Wren for rebuilding London after the disastrous fire of 1666. However, his plan was ignored in the rush to rebuild the city.

The nineteenth-century redesign of Paris must be listed among the more successful attempts at city planning. The beauty of Paris today is not accidental but the result of seventeen years of rebuilding directed by Baron Haussmann under the sponsorship

The Italian Renaissance city of Palma Nova was designed as a nine-pointed star. The points were military defense positions.
British Library

of Napoleon III (1852–1870). Boulevards such as the Champs-Elysées were cut through festering slums, squares were laid out, and the city was planned for separate industrial and residential areas. However, the rationale for the changes was not solely economic and aesthetic; the broad boulevards were also designed to provide clear fields of fire for cannon so that city districts could be isolated in times of civil insurrection.

AMERICAN PLANNING

Within the next thirty years the United States population is projected to grow by 30 million. That is the equivalent of constructing sixty new cities of 500,000. Would we prefer these places be planned or will sprawl simply continue? Urban planning in the United States is usually regarded as a twentieth-century development, but as early as 1672 Lord Ashley Cooper instructed that Charles Town be laid out "into regular streets for be the buildings never so mean and thin at first, yet as the town increases in riches and people, the void places will be filled up and the buildings will grow more beautiful." Philadelphia was laid out according to a gridiron pattern. Today, the area surrounding Independence Hall once again shows the original pattern intended by William Penn. North American colonial cities as disparate as Quebec in the north and James Oglethorpe's Savannah in the South began their existence as planned enterprises.

WASHINGTON, DC

Pierre L'Enfant's plan for Washington, DC, is the best-known example of North American town planning during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. L'Enfant's original design, produced in 1791, called for broad, sweeping diagonal boulevards overlying a basic

gridiron pattern of major avenues. L'Enfant himself was removed in 1792, after numerous disputes, and his contention that his plan was "most unmercifully spoiled and altered" is largely accurate. For example, he planned a broad boulevard along the Potomac to be lined with gardens; these have never been seen except on his own detailed maps. He even had a plan to divert the river, making it flow toward the Capitol, whence it would be routed over a 40-foot waterfall and then back to its original course.[3] It is probably fortunate that this particular feature was never constructed.

For much of the nineteenth century, muddy Washington remained, in Charles Dickens's words, "a city of magnificent intentions." Washington's oppressively hot, unhealthful summers did not encourage year-round residence. On the eve of the Civil War, when Lincoln assumed the presidency, Washington was still a half-finished quagmire; packed with members of Congress, lobbyists, job seekers, prostitutes, gamblers, and hangers-on while Congress was in session, and deserted when it was not. There was no classical Washington Mall during the nineteenth century.

Near the end of the nineteenth century a revival of interest in L'Enfant's original plan gave us the Mall with the Beaux-Arts neoclassical style of government buildings found in the capital today. Until the railway lines were put underground at the end of the nineteenth century, railway lines actually ran across the Mall in front of the Capitol. Among L'Enfant's legacies are Washington's numerous traffic circles. Any tourist who has ever had the folly of driving into the city is not likely to forget the traffic circles, which disorient even the most experienced drivers.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY TOWNS

During the nineteenth century little creative energy went into designing the rapidly multiplying new towns. New western settlements were built as if God had intended that streets always be laid out in a grid, at right angles to each other. The gridiron pattern, in which plots could easily be divided, was well suited to the feverish speculation that accompanied the nation's early growth; most town promoters were speculators whose major interest in the new communities was quick profit. "The open lot and speculation have always gone hand in hand."[4] The Federal Land Ordinance of 1785 encouraged the gridiron pattern, since it divided all lands west of the Appalachians into units of one square mile to facilitate their sale to settlers.[5] In the American and Canadian West, towns were commonly divided into four quarters with numbered avenues going east to west while numbered streets ran north to south. If hills got in the way, as for example in San Francisco, streets were simply cut up one side and down the other rather than following the natural contour of the land. By the early twentieth century the rectangular grid had come to be identified with the American city. It is in America that the persistence of uniform right-angled streets has been most marked. Here the universality of the plan's adoption, and the rigidity of adherence to it, has been such that Europeans, forgetting the long history of rectangular street planning refer to it now as the American method.[6]

Roads strongly influence the pattern of development of a city. A circular pattern, with roads leading from the center like the spokes of a wheel, focuses attention on the center of the city. It is a system "beloved by chieftains, emperors, priests, and popes."[7] Washington, DC, and Detroit were both designed on modified wheel patterns. The gridiron system, with its square lots, has always facilitated subdivision and thus is the model used in industrial and business-oriented cities in North America and elsewhere (Johannesburg, South Africa, is an example).

In the new frontier towns, housing was as predictable as the pattern of streets. The same American businesspeople who prided themselves on their originality and inventiveness in business created towns that were uninspired and repetitive. Every town had its Main Street, Oak Street, and Elm Street. Chicago, largely reduced to ashes by the 1871 Chicago Fire, was one of the few cities insisting that new residences after the fire be built of brick or stone.

EARLY PLANNED COMMUNITIES

Historically, totally planned communities have not fared well in North America. In the early nineteenth century, Lowell, Massachusetts, for all its early promise as an idealistic community, quickly deteriorated into just another New England mill town. Pullman, Illinois, was designed in the 1880s as an experiment in both well-managed labor relations and town planning. In the words of its founder and sole owner, George Pullman, "With such surroundings and such human regard for the needs of the body as well as the soul the disturbing conditions of strikes and other troubles that periodically convulse the world of labor would not be found here."[8] George Pullman proved to be a poor prophet. Pullman is today best known because of the bitter strike there in 1894, a strike that was finally broken by the National Guard.

Of the new communities organized around religious or political-philosophical doctrines—New Harmony, Indiana, and Oneida, New York, for example—only Salt Lake City has grown and prospered, largely because it had, under Brigham Young, a very tight and well-run social organization. It also had an excellent environmental location along the trail to the California gold fields. An early twentieth-century attempt to create a feminist planned community was Alice Austin's "Socialist City" of Llano del Rio in southern California.[9] The homes were built without kitchens and backed up on a communal eating area. This was intended to relieve housewives of the drudgery of cooking. The planned community, like most utopian communities, was underfinanced and went bankrupt in 1917. As a sidelight, it might be noted that such early feminist communities often had a distinctly middle-class orientation. Middle-class women would be relieved of cooking, clothes washing, and heavy cleaning, with that work to be done by lower-class women servants.

PARKS

One of the brightest aspects in the rather discouraging story of nineteenth-century urban planning is the work of Frederick Law Olmsted. In 1857, after much controversy, he began building Central Park on 843 acres of wasteland on the outskirts of New York City. The site was hardly promising, for, as Olmsted described it, much of it was a swamp "seeped in the overflow and mush of pigsties, slaughterhouses, and bone boiling works, and the stench was sickening." Olmstead turned the landscape itself into architecture with rolling hills and winding paths. Not only did Central Park serve the function of providing "lungs" for the city, but it inspired other cities to copy New York's successful plan. Parks were built across the country, and some of them, such as the park systems of Kansas City, Milwaukee, Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, have become invaluable city assets. Olmsted also designed Montreal's central Mont-Royal Park.

There was a pronounced profit as well as an aesthetic motive in creating parks since adjacent property greatly increased in value. Thus, major real estate developers favored the construction of parks and parkways. Private interests favored public spaces that increased property values.

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT

Perhaps the most pronounced effect on the design of American cities came from the "City Beautiful" movement that emerged from the World's Columbian Exposition (or World's Fair) held in Chicago in 1893. The Columbian Exposition was Chicago's attempt to show the world that it was no longer a ramshackle town surrounding stockyards, but a booming modern metropolis. City leaders were determined to make a good impression, so Daniel Burnham was placed in charge of assembling the nation's leading architects and landscape designers. Their goal was to create a modern wonder: the famous White City, lit at night by the then-new electric light bulbs. The Columbian Exposition marked the first major use of alternating current, and the Fair had its own million-dollar generating plant which used three times as much electricity as the entire city of Chicago. All the Fair buildings—with the exception of the Transportation Building, designed by the great architect Louis Sullivan—were designed in a semi-classical Beaux-Arts style.

The classical buildings of White City, combined with harmoniously planned lagoons and grounds, created an overwhelming impact even for the architecturally sophisticated. As the author Hamlin Garland wrote to his parents back home on the farm, "Sell the cookstove if necessary and come. You *must* see the Fair."[10] Some 27 million people (in a nation of 67 million) came to view the two hundred buildings of exhibits on 533 lakeside acres.

The Fair's famous Ferris wheel dwarfed later versions. Ferris's original wheel carried some 2,100 passengers in thirty-six cars as large as streetcars that held sixty people each. Everyone who saw the Columbian Exposition went home deeply impressed. Today the

White City lives on in literature since the White City was transformed by the writer L. Frank Baum into the Emerald City in Oz, forever there at the end of the Yellow Brick Road just beyond the rainbow.

The majestic size of the Columbian Exposition buildings neatly meshed with the optimistic and expansionist mood of the country at the turn of the century. Strong, powerful buildings were a way of expressing the fever of imperialism and material success then sweeping the land. The United States was (Americans believed) blessed by God with a "manifest destiny" to rule.

White City, with its magnificence and grandeur, started a trend; for decades it became customary to design all government buildings in neoclassical Beaux-Arts style. As a result of the City Beautiful movement, there is not a major city in the United States without at least one government building—a city hall, court, train station, or library—designed to roughly resemble a Roman temple. Cleveland, St. Louis, Detroit, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and especially Washington, DC, were strongly affected by the City Beautiful movement. Many of the government buildings were poor imitations, but among the better products of the neoclassical revival are, in addition to the Washington Mall, the famous civic center in San Francisco, the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Philadelphia. The latter terminates at a majestic neoclassical art museum (where in the Rocky movies he runs up the museum stairs). It must be pointed out that the City Beautiful movement paid attention almost exclusively to public spaces such as city centers; there was little concern for housing or neighborhoods.

Parks, which have already been discussed, were related to—though not an integral part of—the City Beautiful movement. A number of elaborate park systems, tied together by attractive boulevards, were developed to further beautify the city. The excellent city parks of Chicago, Kansas City, and Washington, DC, are largely a result of the early-twentieth-century trend for planned public development.

The World Columbian Exhibition with its monumental public architecture influenced the "City Beautiful" movement and public architecture for the first half of the twentieth century. Frances Benjamin Johnston/Library of Congress

The model City Beautiful plan was Daniel Burnham's Chicago Plan, created at the request of Chicago's business leaders in 1909. Burnham's master plan for the city (which is still the plan) proposed a massive civic building program of museums, with a central feature of this plan being an extensive network of city parks tied together by a system of grand, tree-shaded boulevards. Chicago's landmark Lake Shore Drive, built on filled land, remains today as one example. It is worth noting that pressure for developing the plan came from business and civic leaders rather than city government. Burnham captured the mood of the age when he ordered his staff to "make no little plans, they have no magic to stir men's souls."

The nation's capital also profited from the City Beautiful emphasis on planning public buildings and public spaces. L'Enfant's long-neglected design for Washington, DC, was revived, and Burnham and other architects prepared plans for the beautification of Washington from which we now have the present-day "federal triangle" of government buildings plus the Mall between the Capitol and the Lincoln Memorial.

At about the same time Ottawa was being designed as Canada's national capital. However, in Canada the building style was not classical. Rather, as a British colony Canada looked to Victorian England and copied the Gothic style of the English Houses of Parliament. The overall result is one that suggests order rather than power.

The City Beautiful movement can be criticized on aesthetic grounds, but it did have a concept of the city as an integrated whole and a vision of what it could be. It was a solid, conscious, and sincere attempt to improve the urban environment. The greatest weakness of the City Beautiful movement was that it ignored the problem of housing, particularly that of the slums.

TENEMENT REFORM

The early twentieth century saw a movement by social reformers such as Jane Addams to improve the quality of life in inner-city slums. (Also influenced were the later Chicago School of urban scholars.) Among other things, social reformers were concerned with protecting immigrant populations by passing model tenement laws to correct some of the worst abuses in the design and construction of older tenements. To reformers such as Jacob Riis, the slum was the enemy of the home and of basic American virtues. To quote Riis:

> You cannot let men live like pigs when you need their votes as freemen; it is not safe. You cannot rob a child of its childhood, of its home, its play, its freedom from toil and care, and expect to appeal to the grown-up voter's manhood. . . . The slum is the enemy of the home. Because of this the chief city of our land [New York] came long ago to be called "The Homeless City." When this people comes to be truly called a nation without homes there will no longer be any nation.[11]

The answer at that time appeared clear: destroy the slum and you will destroy the breeding ground of social problems. Symptoms of social disorganization such as alcoholism, delinquency, divorce, desertion, and mental illness were to be cured, or at least greatly reduced, through the provision of better housing and more open spaces for the young. This belief in salvation by bricks and mortar fit in neatly with the American belief in the unlimited potential of technology. Note the following 1905 assertion:

> Bad housing is tremendously expensive to a community. It explains much that is mysterious in relation to drunkenness, immorality, poverty, crime and all forms of physical and social decline. Improved dwellings are the best guarantee of civilization. They help conserve the family institution, which is the underlying basis to society. In great cities especially there is no more important phase of civic welfare.[12]

Many desperately needed housing improvements were made as a result of the campaigns of the reformers, but crime, violence, and alcoholism were not banished as a result. The relationship between housing and social behavior is complex and unfortunately not amenable to simple brick-and-mortar solutions. Nonetheless, we keep being disappointed when housing programs such as public housing don't also produce changes in social behavior.

TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY PATTERNS

THE CITY EFFICIENT

The golden age of urban planning and reform of politics died with the entry of the United States into World War I. Holistic visions of the city's future like the City

Beautiful movement provided did not fare well in the postwar laissez-faire atmosphere of the 1920s. As a result, the emphasis shifted from the City Beautiful to the City Efficient. Bold urban planning was replaced by city engineering. During the 1920s until after World War II, the city was viewed as an engineering problem, and planners became technicians concerned with traffic patterns, traffic lights, and sewer systems. The city was viewed as a machine, and the goal was to keep the machine running smoothly. To this end planning and land-use regulation through zoning became accepted functions of local government.

ZONING AND BEYOND

The concept of the city as an evolving organic unit was overshadowed by the development of zoning, a new planning tool. Zoning, which became a force in the United States with the New York City Zoning Resolution of 1916, was originally seen as a device to "prevent the intrusion of improper uses into homogeneous areas." "Improper" use of land meant not only industrial and commercial establishments, but also lower-class housing. It was an attempt to segregate land use and freeze "non-compatible" uses out of upper-middle-class neighborhoods. What made zoning significant was that now "bad" usages could be controlled by law. The effect of the first zoning laws was mainly negative—that is, to keep unwanted types of buildings or usages from an area. Zoning boundaries in many cases recognized the existence of "natural areas" as described by the early human ecologists, and then went a step further and tried to prevent additional change in these areas. The 1921 Standard State Zoning Enabling Act, which was issued by the federal government, advised state legislatures to grant the following power to the cities:

> For the purpose of promoting health, safety, morals, and the general welfare of the community, the legislative body of cities and incorporated villages is hereby empowered to regulate and restrict the height, number of stories, and size of the buildings, and other structures, the percentage of the lot that may be occupied, the size of the yards, courts, and other open spaces, the density of the population, and the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence, or other purpose.[13]

In practice, zoning was commonly used for social purposes of producing racial, social, and economic exclusivity. Zoning was used before the Fair Housing Act of 1968 as a means of enforcing racial segregation.[14] Even when used for land-use zoning the results often were unfortunate (see Box 13.1). For example, cities often over-zoned large city edge tracts for commercial usage, which unintentionally pushed new residential developments to the suburbs.

After World War II, subdivision regulations often became the main control device in controlling land use in new suburban areas. Today, CIDs (common-interest developments) are commonly used to control all aspects of the development's operation.

Interestingly, New York City, which pioneered zoning, has now moved to a hands-off policy, except when prodded by a complaint or where there is an issue of public safety.[15] New York's ignoring of zoning laws began because of budget cuts but it became policy when it was realized that zoning was hurting the city more than it was helping. When artists and others in the 1970s started to move into abandoned industrial properties in SoHo, the question, "Who is hurt?" was raised. Residential use seemed better than empty buildings, even if the use was "out of code." Now lower Manhattan's old commercial and industrial zones have been reborn. They house not only residents but trendy restaurant and shopping areas, as well as most of the city's 1,500-plus media-related computer companies. While New York's zoning laws technically remain, the reality is that zoning in New York has been abandoned.

Houston, Texas, as of 2014, is the only major city in North America without any zoning laws. However, Houston does not look noticeably different from other cities because the market mechanism allocates the downtown land to business and commercial usage while outlying land is used for residential purposes. It is not economically feasible to deviate from the normative pattern of land use. Also, deed restrictions on land use are a de facto equivalent of zoning. More than 10,000 deed restrictions cover more than two-thirds of the city; they are most often enforced in wealthy neighborhoods along Memorial Drive and in River Oaks.

BOX 13.1 JANE JACOBS: A PROPHET IN HER TIME

Fifty-plus years after its first publication, Jane Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* remains the classic critique of zoning and one of the great books of urban planning.* Jacobs was one of those rare people whose writings actually changed how things are done. Using Greenwich Village in New York City as an example (she later lived in Toronto), Jacobs argued that the mixed housing and commercial usages and the resulting congestion—factors that orthodox planners deplored—are the very reason why the area has retained its buoyancy and unique character over time. Cities, she suggested, are natural economic generators of diversity and incubators of new enterprises, and attempts by planners to zone various activities into distinct areas only work toward dullness and eventual stagnation both economically and socially.† Jacobs's ideas have had a major impact on planning. The city of Toronto has largely adopted her approach.‡

Jacobs said that four conditions are indispensable if diversity and liveliness are to be generated in a city: (1) The district, and indeed as many of its internal parts as possible, must serve more than one primary function, preferably more than two. These must ensure the presence of people who go outdoors on different schedules and are in the place for different reasons. (2) Most blocks should be short—that is, streets and opportunities to turn corners must be frequent. (3) The district must mingle buildings that vary in age and condition, including a good proportion of old ones so that they vary in the economic yield they must produce. This mingling must be fairly close-grained. (4) There must be a sufficiently dense concentration of people, for whatever purposes they may be there. This includes dense concentration in the case of people who are there because of residence.§

Jacobs saw the physical environment of the city directly affecting city life and by advocating mixed populations and land usages she directly challenged one of the basic tenets of traditional city planning. Jacobs argued that providing a mixture of functions—residence, work, entertainment—ensures that eyes are constantly on its streets, maintaining safety. Research appears to support the view that such diversity does contribute to lower crime rates.** This diversity of use further means that uniquely urban specialty shops can operate profitably because considerable traffic passes their doors. Short city blocks provide for alternative routes and use of different streets, with the result that a cross-section of the public passes the doors of the smaller specialty operations.

Old buildings are needed, since, as Jacobs puts it, "Old ideas can sometimes use new buildings. New ideas must use old buildings." New buildings are limited to enterprises that can support the high costs of construction and rent. Old buildings not only provide space for new enterprises; they also break the visual monotony, and they can house cozy stores that provide gossip as well as merely selling goods. Finally, the dense concentration of people in an area contributes to its vitality and liveliness. Jacobs suggests that it is not accidental that the district in San Francisco with the highest dwelling density is the popular North Beach–Telegraph Hill section. High building density does not, of course, necessarily mean crowding. Medium density areas fail to provide liveliness and safety, and they have none of the advantages of low-density, suburban areas.

In Jacobs's view, the population and environmental characteristics of a neighborhood shape its social character: Great cities are not like towns, only larger. They are not like suburbs, only denser. They differ from towns and suburbs in basic ways, and one of those is that cities are, by definition full of strangers. . . . Even residents who live near each other are strangers, and must be, because of the sheer number of people in small geographical compass. The bedrock attribute of a successful city district is that a person must feel safe and secure among all these strangers. He or she must not feel menaced by them. A city district that fails in this respect also does badly in other ways and lays up for itself, and for its city at large, mountains on mountains of trouble.††

A criticism of Jacobs is that her preoccupation with street safety makes her oblivious to other urban problems. Also many critics say that she ignored the growing power and presence of large corporations in shaping urban real estate.‡‡ Jacobs can also be criticized for not dealing with the question of racial change in the city. Nonetheless, the importance of her work should not be underemphasized.

Because of her influence, the planners of today are far more conscious of the social impact of design and planning decisions. Her message that cities are for people has for decades directly affected the practice of urban planning. Jane Jacobs died in 2006, but her ideas regarding planning continue to have influence.

*Jane Jacobs, The *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Random House, New York, 1961.
†For an analysis of Jacobs's views, see Andrew Sancton, "Jane Jacobs on the Organization of Municipal Government," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 22(4):463–471, Winter 2000; and Harvey M. Choldin, "Retrospective Review Essay: Neighborhood Life and Urban Environment," *American Journal of Sociology* 48(2):457–463, 1978.
‡Amrita Daniere, "Canadian Urbanism and Jane Jacobs," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 22(4):459–461, Winter 2000.
§Jane Jacobs, op. cit.
**E. P. Fowler, "Street Management and City Design," *Social Forces* 66(2):365–389, December 1987.
†† Jacobs, op. cit., p. 300.
‡‡ R. Montgomery, "Is There Still Life in *The Death and Life*?," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 64(3):269–274, 1998.

MASTER PLANS TO EQUITY PLANNING

The idea of the City Efficient can be seen in the master plans for city development that became the hallmark of city-planning agencies from the 1920s to the 1970s. The purpose of the master plan was to coordinate and regulate all phases of city development; but in practice the preparation of the plan frequently became an end in itself, since the planners rarely had any real authority over the direction of urban development. The plan, even if formally adopted by the city council, was not legally binding unless backed up by specific zoning and other laws.

When defining neighborhoods, physical criteria were used almost exclusively. In the words of Gans:

> The ends underlying the planners' physical approach reflected their Protestant middle-class view of city life. As a result, the master plan tried to eliminate as "blighting influences" many of the land uses and institutions of lower class and ethnic groups. Most of the plans either made no provision of tenements, rooming houses, second hand stores, and marginal loft industry, or located them in catchall zones of "nuisance uses," in which all land uses were permitted. Popular facilities that they considered morally or culturally undesirable were also excluded.[16]

The death blow for many a master plan was the upsurge of urban renewal and other development plans after World War II. These development schemes were frequently put forward by business groups or the federal government with no concern for the city's general plan as such. Conflicts between the static master plan and specific development proposals, especially those with federal funding, were almost always resolved in favor of the specific proposals.

The urban riots and social upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s shook up the planning profession and led to advocacy planning for less-favored urban populations.[17] Planning became more socially responsive. Today most planners question the utility of creating citywide plans unless the plans can have direct influence on the future development of the city. Neighborhood-level plans are often more useful. Not infrequently neighborhood-level groups use neighborhood-level plans to block unwanted changes such as institutional expansion, or to redirect city resources to the neighborhood level. So called "equity planners" consciously try to change the bureaucracy to move power and decision-making away from elites and to mobilize low-income and working-class residents. The work of equity planners focuses on the short-term rather than on long-range comprehensive planning. Advocates of equity planning tend to see it as another form of politics.[18] The twenty-first century generally has seen some decline in planners' interest in social issues.

CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

As noted in Box 13.1, the work of Jane Jacobs encouraged planners to think about how a mix of land usages, shorter blocks, and twenty-four-hour activity might contribute to lower crime levels. Earlier in the text we examined how physical space often has different symbolic meanings to different groups. The physical environment is not neutral but can be used to increase or decrease various behaviors. Contemporary concern with the question of crime control dates to the publication of Newman's book *Defensible Space.*[19] He used his sociological knowledge to emphasize design factors that would contribute to a sense of having control over one's environment.

In recent years interest in crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) has revived. City or suburban neighborhoods use design to augment safety by providing natural access control with house fences and shrubs, as well as physical design elements, to discourage entry except by those who belong there.[20] Natural surveillance can be increased by placing windows so open areas can be observed. Lighting and landscaping can also be used to promote unobstructed views. Finally, territorial behavior can be encouraged by using sidewalks, porches, and landscaping to define the boundaries between what is public space and what are private areas. The goal is to increase surveillance and human activity in order to decrease the opportunity for crime.

Street design also can play a role since criminals prefer locations with high traffic that permit anonymity and easy escape. Streets that are well maintained and landscaped, and especially those that slow down traffic and discourage pass-through traffic, discourage criminal activity. Sometimes something as simple as blocking off a street at one end can produce noticeable improvements. Importantly, none of the above requires walling off a community or adding police; they are attempts to produce safe and livable communities without resorting to gates or guards.

EUROPEAN PLANNING

Now let's take a few pages to see how planning is done in Europe. This will provide a point of comparison with U.S. planned towns discussed later in this chapter. Lacking the land resources of the United States, Europeans have been more concerned with conserving their resources and preventing unlimited growth. The desires of the individual builder are more subject to the criteria of the public welfare. The major ways in which European planning differs from American planning are these:

1. Government planning is expected and accepted as necessary.
2. There is greater governmental control of land.
3. Housing subsidies are commonplace.
4. Public transportation is widely used.

The United States, by contrast, has yet to formulate a national, state, or even regional land-use policy. Ironically, some of those who most oppose government land-use policies as "socialistic" are often the strongest supporters of stringent, detailed controls in their own local communities. They live in subdivisions (gated or not) that regulate all physical details such as lot sizes, home sizes, building materials, type and placement of fences, where cars can be parked, colors the house can be painted, and even whether residents can leave their garage door open. The question, then, is not planning or no planning, it is at what level and for whose benefit the planning is done.

PLANNING AND CONTROL OF LAND

Some European cities enjoy the advantage of control over their own municipal lands. Stockholm began buying land in 1904 outside the city limits. This land has long since been annexed to the city, so that Stockholm is now in the position of owning about 75 percent of the land within its administrative boundaries. The city rarely sells its land; instead, it leases the land on sixty-year renewable leases to both public and private developers. The money earned from the leases pays off the cost of the loan used to buy the land, and the municipality has the additional advantage of profiting directly from increases in land values. The public, rather than private land speculators, thus profits from the increased value of the land. If the city wants the land after the sixty-year lease is up, it must go to court and prove that the land is needed for the public interest. Then it must pay the leaseholder the value of any buildings on the property. Such a system would not be politically acceptable in the United States or Canada, where landowners' private profit is valued.

Europe also has a tradition of urban planning. For example, for half a century Stockholm has been developing a system of subcenters or "minicities," built one after another along rapid-transit lines extending in five directions from the old city center. Each subcenter contains between 10,000 and 20,000 inhabitants and is served by its own community services, schools, and shops. These subcenters are seen not as independent towns, but as satellites with easy access to the center city. Blocks of flats, frequently high-rises, are built within 550 yards of a transit station; detached and terrace-style housing is built beyond the apartments up to about 1,000 yards from the station. Cars are routed through green areas surrounding the living areas. In addition to subcenters, "main centers" are built at appropriate intervals. Each main center, with a larger shopping mall, theaters, and a major transit station, has a supporting population of between 50,000 and 100,000 persons within ten minutes by automobile or public transit.

Students should keep in mind that land-use systems are not socially neutral. Private laissez-faire land ownership tends to further the gap between rich and poor. Western European nations, by contrast, place greater emphasis on providing a minimum economic floor for all and minimizing social inequality.

HOUSING PRIORITIES

The postwar western European housing shortage came to an end by the 1980s. Attention then shifted from building programs to an emphasis on the quality of the urban environment. During the postwar period there

was heavy emphasis on clearing slums and war-damaged central areas and on building new towns on the urban periphery. Outside of England, these new towns were often high-rise in nature. A welfare-state approach also led to the construction of largely rent-controlled and rent-subsidized units. By 1980, for example, council housing—that is, public housing—accounted for one-third of the entire housing stock in Great Britain. The conservative government under Margaret Thatcher (1979 to 1990) began selling council houses to their occupants. Today approximately a fifth of Great Britain's housing is council housing.

Throughout western Europe, increased affluence plus an interest in central-city living is leading to the rehabilitation and revitalization of older inner-city housing stock. High-rise housing projects are in disfavor, and the focus is on gentrification of older neighborhoods. Governments increasingly place heavier emphasis on "private market housing," although most new "private market" residential buildings in Europe are subsidized in one way or another in order to hold down costs and maintain quality. Germany and the Netherlands have elaborate programs for loans to non-profit housing organizations; Great Britain has rent rebates; and Sweden has an annual housing allowance for all families with two or more children, plus other housing subsidies. In Sweden only 35 percent of all housing built since World War II has been constructed solely by the private sector. Some 44 percent of the housing in Holland is publicly supported in some fashion. Housing costs in most western European countries take less than 25 percent of family income because of subsidies. This is excellent by American standards. The trade-off is higher taxes, which European populations have chosen over a lower level of services.

TRANSPORTATION

Cars are relied on extensively in low-density American metro areas with their commitment to dispersed single-family houses. On the other hand, in more densely populated European cities, where most people reside in apartment buildings (typically of three or four stories), public transit is the norm. Even in affluent Sweden, which has a per capita income approximating that of Canada, and where 90 percent of the households own an auto, about half of the trips to or from work in Stockholm are made by public transit.[21] There is excellent public-subsidized subway and ground transportation. Stockholm's public transportation actually offers a free taxi ride if public transportation is delayed twenty minutes or more.[22]

In order to decrease auto usage many European cities such as Stockholm, Oslo, and London use congestion pricing. That is, they charge motorists to drive into the center of the city. So far congestion charges have speeded up traffic. Former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg proposed adopting congestion pricing of $8 per car per day. It has minimal chance of adoption.

For many European cities with narrow streets and limited garages, the convenience of driving is often outweighed by the problem of where to park. An average European city may have only half the autos of its American counterpart, but these cars can cause immense congestion and parking problems. Fortunately, mass transit in London, Paris, and anywhere in Holland, Germany, or Scandinavia is remarkably fast and efficient.

URBAN GROWTH POLICIES

While the United States does not have a national land-use or growth policy, European countries do. Great Britain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden are all seeking to stem migration to the largest centers. Although the measures haven't been entirely successful, they have slowed the movement from smaller to larger places. In Britain the goal has been to stem the so-called drift to the south—out of Scotland and Wales and into the area centering on London. In France, the goal has been to lessen the domination of Paris; in Italy, to develop the economy of the depressed south, or Mezzogiorno; in the Netherlands, to save the remaining green areas; and in Sweden, to halt the flow out of more northern areas into Stockholm and the south.

Manufacturers are given economic incentives to invest in areas needing growth. In addition, controls are increasingly imposed upon adding factories or offices to places where growth isn't wanted. For example, the Netherlands puts higher taxes on buildings in the cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague. Another policy is to relocate government offices to areas where growth is desired. Sweden is relocating one-quarter of its government offices outside of Stockholm—a policy that definitely does not appeal to the government workers who have to move.

It is difficult to see any urban growth and redistribution policy ever being implemented in the United States. There is no clamor for action by Washington, and programs by individual states are unlikely to be effective. If one state imposed tough controls, a company could—and probably would—simply up and move to another state that did not. Thus, while European programs for dispersion of growth have been somewhat successful, they are unlikely to be copied in North America. Our decentralized system also has a flexibility lacking elsewhere. The economic and housing growth in Sunbelt states reflects a de facto decentralization of people and power from older established northern and eastern cities.

THE DUTCH APPROACH

Americans who fear that metro areas of the United States are turning into unrelenting sprawl should find it instructive to see how the Dutch are coping with similar problems. The Netherlands is the most densely populated country in Europe. If the United States had the same population density, it would have a population of over 3.7 billion. The problem in the Netherlands is aggravated by the fact that the majority of the Dutch population is found in a megalopolis about one hundred miles in diameter, including Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague. This conurbation is known as the *Randstad*, or "rim city."

It is possible, nonetheless, to reach the open countryside in half an hour's time from the center of any of the cities in the *Randstad*. In spite of their limited land the Dutch lead remarkably uncluttered lives. Urban sprawl such as that found in the United States is virtually unknown. That is because when a city such as Amsterdam stops, it stops abruptly. It is quite common at the city's edge to see massive blocks of high-rise apartments overlooking cows peacefully grazing in open fields. The Dutch have kept their towns compact, and valuable woods and fields are kept as a reserve for the use of all.

A system of local, regional, and—finally—national controls prevents urban sprawl. If a local development is in conflict with the regional plan and if the differences cannot be resolved at that level, the question then goes to the national level for a decision. There is no national plan as such; rather, there are national guidelines that influence the regional plans and the city development plans. An attempt is made to avoid rigidity, and plans are constantly being modified—within the national guidelines—to meet new situations and needs. Without controls, the remaining green space between The Hague, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam would soon be filled.

NEW TOWNS

Throughout the centuries, humans have had visions of creating new towns free from the problems of older cities. The term "utopia" originated as the title of a book (1516) by Thomas More, which gave his version of how a new continent of new towns should be organized. Here the emphasis is on new towns that have actually been built, beginning with the English new towns program and then discussing European alternatives, and, finally, American examples. (For examples of Asian new towns see the sections on Singapore and Pudong in Chapter 15: Asian Urban Patterns.)

BRITISH NEW TOWNS

The new town movement owes its origins to Ebenezer Howard (1850–1928), an English court stenographer who proposed building whole new communities in a book called *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1902).[23] Howard's new towns were not to be simply another version of suburbs. Rather, they were to be self-contained communities of 30,000 inhabitants that would have within their boundaries ample opportunities not only for residence but also for employment, education, and recreation (see Figure 13.1). The towns were to be completely planned, with all land held in public ownership to prevent speculation. Frederick Osborn, a major proponent of new towns, described them as follows:

> Howard's Garden City is to be industrial and commercial with a balanced mixture of all social groups and levels of income. Areas are worked out for the zones: public buildings and places of entertainment are placed centrally, shops intermediately, factories on the edge with the railway and sidings. Houses are of different sizes, but all have gardens and all are within easy range of factories, shops, schools, cultural

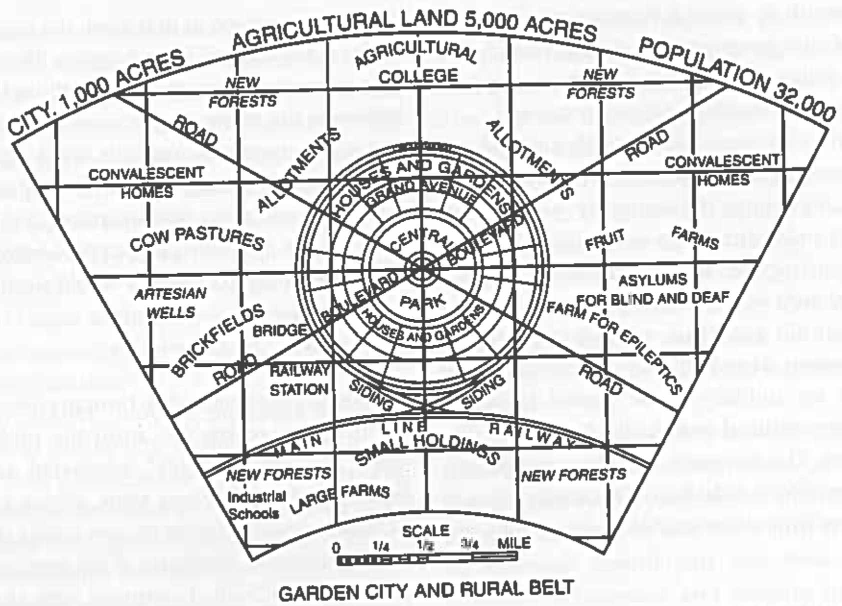

FIGURE 13.1 Garden City and Rural Belt Model
Howard's garden cities were designed to be self-sufficient and self-contained communities. Note that the rail lines do not enter the city proper.

centers, and the open country. Of special interest is the central park and the inner Green Belt or Ring Park, 420 feet wide, containing the main schools with large playgrounds and such buildings as churches.[24]

Howard's garden cities were a reaction against the urban abuses of the industrial revolution in England. His new towns were not to be extensions of the morally and socially polluted city but self-sufficient towns with all necessary amenities, where one could enjoy the benefits of a healthful country life. The garden city was fundamentally anti-urban in its basic conception. It was to solve the problem of the great cities largely by abandoning them and starting over with a fresh environment. In Howard's words:

> There are in reality not only, as is so constantly assumed, two alternatives—town life and country life—but a third alternative in which all the advantages of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country, may be secured in perfect combination.[25]

The most distinctive feature of the garden cities was that beyond the city there was an encircling green belt of natural fields and woodlands that the town owned and could never sell. This green belt could not be encroached upon for housing, business, industry, or even farming, although it could be used for pasturage. Because of this feature, garden cities are also known as "green belt cities." The green belt not only provided the residents exposure to nature, it also was intended to prevent the city from growing beyond its planned limit of 30,000 inhabitants.

Nor was the internal design of the garden city left to chance. Strict zoning was central to Howard's basic scheme. The residential city was divided into five neighborhoods or wards, each with approximately 5,000 residents. Each was to have its own centrally located school and community sub-center, and every attempt was to be made to keep all houses within walking distance of factories, schools, churches, shops, and, of course, the open country.[26]

The whole site, including agricultural land, was to be under quasi-public or trust ownership to ensure planning control through leasehold covenants. When the population outgrew the prescribed size and area, another new town was to be created with its own sacrosanct green belt. As with the ancient Greeks, problems of growth were to be handled by colonization rather than by extending city boundaries.

First Towns

The concept of garden cities would have gone the way of other utopian plans had Howard not been an activist as well as a visionary. In 1902, with the aid of the newly formed Garden City Association, he established the first garden city at Letchworth, some thirty miles north of London.[27] This initial venture was plagued by many difficulties, the principal one being that the site was poor. Another problem was the difficulty of finding investors for a project that limited dividends to a maximum of 5 percent per year. In fact, it was twenty years before the shareholders received any dividends at all.[28] The understandable reluctance of industry to move out to the new town meant that residents largely became commuters to London—a situation directly opposed to Howard's conception.

Land for a second new town—Welwyn Garden City—was secured in 1920. Welwyn Garden City suffered financial crises for many years, but it eventually surmounted them. Today it is a pleasant and prosperous community of 50,000 residents about twenty-five minutes by rail from London.

Government Involvement

Were it not for World War II, Howard's garden cities would probably have remained a quaint experiment. However, World War II, with its extensive destruction in the heart of London, led to the Greater London Plan of 1944, with new towns as one part of a four-part policy. The policy included (1) a green belt around London to halt continuous metropolitan growth, (2) new towns to house the expanding urban population, (3) redevelopment of inner-city areas, conforming to higher standards than had existed previously, and (4) an attempt to control the location of employment and to prevent everyone from building in London.[29]

The British government became directly involved in building new towns through the New Towns Act of 1946. In the back of everyone's mind was the fact that London had suffered grievously from bombing during the war and that new towns would disperse both population and industry at numerous smaller nodes rather than create one massive target in London. Government involvement in new towns meant that building on a large scale was now possible, and compulsory purchase of land from private owners for building the town was also available.

The involvement of the British government, however, meant that the new towns would differ in significant ways from Howard's original scheme. First, the development corporation was appointed by and answerable to the central government, not to the town. Second, the size range was pushed upward—first to 60,000, and then up to 250,000. This is far from Howard's limit of 30,000. Third, no provision was made for nearby land to be used only for agriculture. "As far as access to the countryside is concerned the new towns do not differ from most other settlements in Britain."[30] Finally, the concept of a city providing all its own employment was also abandoned, in practice if not in theory, although the new towns are certainly not designed to be commuter suburbs. They are basically manufacturing centers, with approximately half the population in manufacturing and the other half in trade, the services, and the professions.

The first of the English government-sponsored new towns, Stevenage, was begun in 1947. Among other innovations, it had the first pedestrian shopping mall in Britain and neighborhoods designed to separate pedestrian walkways from contact with automobile and truck traffic. While the new towns have been moderately successful economically, they have not significantly altered social behavior. New-town residents have no fewer class prejudices and social problems than their counterparts not living in new towns.[31] The early expectation that planned communities could determine people's behavior has not been met. Some thirty-four new towns, housing some 4 million persons, have been completed in Great Britain. This means that only 5 percent of Britain's housing construction after World War II took place in new towns. As other British housing stock improved the population has become less pleased with the new towns. Many have become rather dull places with aging housing stock.

NEW TOWNS IN EUROPE

European countries, including Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, and Russia, built new towns after

World War II. The Russian development of new towns was part of broad schemes for national development and the decentralization of industry. Many of their earlier new towns were connected with hydroelectric power projects and then expanded into manufacturing centers. The Russian new communities were company towns where the goal was not to build more humane environments but to provide housing for factory workers.

In Sweden and the Netherlands, the new communities were designed to be closely tied to the central city, and to serve as residential—not employment—areas. Scandinavian new towns such as Vällingby, Farsta, and Täby are basically residential and shopping areas. Unlike the British new towns, they are constructed along rapid-transit lines so that they will be an integral part of the city's life; they are not designed to be independent and self-contained employment units. European new towns are really extensions of the older city into the countryside, rather than attempts to create new rural or suburban utopian communities.

All European new towns have in common the fact that they were initiated, planned, and financed by the government. While there has occasionally been some financing from cooperatives, unions, or even private sources, the land and the facilities built on it have been owned either directly by the local government or indirectly by the government through quasi-public corporations chartered by the national government to build and administer the town.

Throughout Europe high-rise apartment buildings are generally used in new towns, not only to make economical use of the land because land costs are high but also to avoid suburban sprawl. More than 80 percent of the units are in high-rise blocks of flats. English new towns, on the other hand, built more than 80 percent single-family homes.

Although postwar Swedish new towns such as Vällingby and Farsta were constructed to deliberately high densities, the communities have an openness and closeness to nature that residents find appealing. While there are no private yards there are many walkways, trees, and common open spaces. Swedish new towns built during the 1970s and 1980s have a far more negative image. The brick-sided walk-up apartments were replaced with six- to eight-story concrete-slab buildings—many more than a block long. Such slab cities have been criticized as "inhuman environments" and social disasters. Built in parallel rows, they present a very sterile and uninviting appearance. Only the pastel color of the buildings distinguishes one group from another. (After dark all the colors look alike, a fact I discovered when I got lost trying to locate the building where I was staying as a guest.) Today the concrete-slab buildings largely house new immigrant populations.

Social problems associated with new towns—and the high cost of building them—have resulted in European nations ending new town building. Today the high-rise new towns on the outskirts of Paris house a high concentration of North African and other Muslim immigrants. In the eyes of many French these high-rise areas are havens of crime, drugs, and Islamic political subversion.[32] To some Europeans the outer city is viewed as negatively as some Americans view inner city projects.

AMERICAN NEW TOWNS

PUBLIC-BUILT NEW TOWNS

Radburn, New Jersey, which opened in 1929, is the archetype of the American planned new town. Radburn was built by a nonprofit to encourage community and control auto usage by putting everything close at hand. Homes were clustered close together and car traffic travels around the town perimeter. Park land is only a few steps from everyone's door, and cars are parked on narrow streets going to the back doors. The last houses in Radburn were built in 1936, but the community today remains such an attractive location that houses rarely remain for sale more than forty-eight hours.[33]

It is sometimes forgotten that during the 1930s the United States government designed, financed, built, and for a decade managed three planned green belt towns surrounded by areas of open land. Like Howard's garden cities, the green belt towns were an attempt to create an idealized less-urban past. The government had three main objectives in building new towns:

1. To demonstrate a new kind of suburban community planning that would combine the advantages of city and country life.
2. To provide good housing at reasonable rents for moderate-income families.
3. To give jobs to thousands of unemployed workers that would result in lasting economic and social benefits to the community in which the work was undertaken.

The three American green belt towns were Greenbelt, Maryland, outside of Washington, DC; Greenhills, Ohio, near Cincinnati; and Greendale, Wisconsin, just south of Milwaukee. They were basically demonstration projects. (An interesting note is that bureaucrats in Washington somehow mixed up the blueprints, so the homes with basements designed for wintry Wisconsin were authorized for Cincinnati, while the cement-slab homes designed for Cincinnati were built outside Milwaukee.)

Plans called for the towns to be composed of neighborhood units and to have their own industry, as in the British model, but first a shortage of funds and then World War II kept them basically commuter suburbs. After World War II, the housing lobby convinced Congress that having the government involved in building and renting low-rent homes was socialistic and a danger to the free-enterprise system. Public Law 65 of 1949 mandated that all the homes built by the government be sold. The green belts surrounding the towns—which had become valuable land with the expansion of the metro areas—were sold. Much of Greendale's green belt is now occupied by privately developed housing tracts and a shopping center. In Greenbelt, Maryland, college students are buying in due to its closeness to the University of Maryland.

FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR NEW TOWNS

The late 1960s brought riots and burning to major American cities. This encouraged Congress to support new communities free from urban blight and suburban sprawl. New towns require heavy front-end outlays for land purchase and infrastructure long before the first house is built or sold. Congress voted federal funds and technical aid to developers and—most importantly—guaranteed each developer's bonds. By 1974, twelve projects had issued bonds for a total of $252 million in federally guaranteed debentures. At this critical point the nation was hit both with an energy crisis and a depressed housing market. Developers found themselves caught with expensive front-end costs and no customers. At that point the Republican administration announced that government support would end. The new towns were cut loose to sink or swim. Only one made it.

The federal government acquired all but one of the new towns by foreclosure and sold the assets at a total loss of $570 million. This loss was the government's own doing, since it underfunded the towns and then pulled back at a critical juncture. By contrast, the British do not anticipate that government-built new towns will be self-supporting for the first decade and a half. There is no sign that the United States government is willing to make such a commitment. It is not likely there will be any U.S. government new town programs in the foreseeable future.

PRIVATE NEW TOWNS: RESTON, COLUMBIA, AND IRVINE

Among the best-known and most successful American new towns are Reston, Virginia, just west of Washington, DC; Columbia, Maryland, near Baltimore on the way to Washington, DC; and Irvine in southern California. All were financed privately, rather than by the government. Irvine, however, differs from the other two: while it was built on new-town principles, it never had a commitment to economic or racial diversity.[34] It was designed from the first to be an upper-class community.

Reston, which was founded in 1964, is an unincorporated planned community of 58,000 as of the 2010 census. Paths and woodlands run through Reston, and it has a large number of corporate offices and other "clean" industries. Reston, like other privately financed new towns has from the first had a distinctly upper-middle-class character. The average buyer in Reston is between thirty and forty years old, is the head of a family with two children, and has an annual median income over $100,000. Two-thirds of the adults in Reston are at least college educated. One of six Reston residents is a minority and Reston has several hundred units of federally subsidized housing. Architecturally, Reston uses contemporary designs. Although Reston's founder had attempted to integrate the community economically by placing middle-income and more expensive houses side by side, this approach was abandoned

as not being economically sound. Reston also has a downtown designed to resemble traditional downtowns. Although Reston was developed before "New Urbanism" as such existed, it anticipated New Urbanism guidelines.

Columbia, Maryland, the second new town, twenty miles north of Washington, DC, was developed by the Rouse Company. Architecturally, Columbia looks more like a traditional development since there is no unifying architectural style. Columbia covers 15,600 acres and will eventually house 110,000 people.[35] As of 2010 it had some 99,600 residents living in ten "villages." Columbia represents an investment of over $3 billion. Wooded areas and pathways run throughout the town. Like most new towns, it is organized into neighborhoods. Each neighborhood has some nine hundred houses, and each has its own elementary school and recreational facilities, including a swimming pool, a neighborhood center, and a convenience store. Four neighborhoods are combined to form a "village" of about 3,500 units, which has an intermediate or middle school, a meeting hall, larger and more varied shops, and a supermarket. These are all designed to cluster around a small plaza with benches and a fountain. There is also a larger shopping center for the whole community in the downtown city center, which contains office buildings and larger department stores.

Socially, Columbia has made a conscious effort to be a racially integrated community: one-quarter of the residents are black. Income integration has generally not been as successful. Subsidized units are not clustered as in Reston, but are spread over five different sites to avoid the creation of a low-income ghetto. Within the community, use of automobiles is discouraged by providing walkways and bicycle paths that are both more direct and not in physical contact with roads. Nonetheless, cars are as numerous as in other suburbs, and the parking lots of the shopping centers are filled.

RESEARCH PARKS

Another form of planned community is the business-oriented research park. Perhaps the most famous of these, the Research Triangle, was founded over three decades ago on a 6,700-acre tract in the Raleigh–Durham–Chapel Hill area of North Carolina. The Research Triangle is run by a state-created foundation that owns and operates the research park.

Research Triangle has come to be an exclusive address. Today, the campus-like park is home to more than fifty high-technology companies with more than 30,000 employees, at least one-quarter of whom must be directly engaged in research. To get into the Research Triangle a company must buy at least eight acres of parkland, its building cannot be high-rise, it has to meet architectural standards, and it can cover no more than 15 percent of the property. Nearby communities try to replicate the atmosphere of the Research Triangle Park by establishing construction restrictions on everything from the size of buildings to McDonald's arches (the latter are banned).

Communities seek office and research parks because they bring nonpolluting, high-tech, and high-paying employment to the area. There are, however, real limits to the number of such enterprises possible in a region.

NEW URBANISM OR TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENTS

The most discussed contemporary housing development is building new communities according to Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) or "New Urbanism" criteria. New Urbanism developers and planners follow smart growth practices. They turn away from the subdivision development practices of recent decades and model their plans on those of closely built old-fashioned small towns. The basic New Urbanism tenet is that communities should be complete and integrated, containing not only housing but also shops, businesses, parks, schools, and civic facilities. (This is the opposite of traditional zoning.) All these activities should be within walking distance of one another and of public transportation. New Urbanism communities are designed to minimize auto usage. Garages, for instance, which often dominate the front of conventional suburban houses, are moved to the rear facing a service drive. This move makes the house and sidewalk more inviting. All this costs 10 percent to 20 percent more than standard subdivision developments.[36]

The pioneers of neo-traditional New Urbanism development are the Miami architects Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk. They believe that design affects whether or not a place develops a sense of community.[37] In order to combat the negative social and design effects of sprawl they advocate building deliberately "old-fashioned"-style homes placed on narrow grid streets that encourage walking, and keeping shopping on the intimate scale of a small town. The image of the New Urbanism is one of homes on tree-lined streets, where one can walk to nearby corner shops to buy a quart of milk or eat out. The goal is to move away from a subdivision to the more personal scale of a walking small town.[38] New Traditional Neighborhood Developments are designed to be comfortable communities with varied architecture and a nineteenth-century scale. They are expressly designed to encourage neighborliness. Examples include Seaside on the Florida Panhandle (the setting for the perfect town of the 1998 Jim Carrey movie *The Truman Show*); Harbor Town, on an island in the Mississippi River across from downtown Memphis; and Laguna West, south of Sacramento.

A suburban New Urbanism community designed to combat sprawl and produce a sense of community through the purposeful design of compact neighborhoods is the 352-acre Kentlands in Gaithersburg, Maryland, northwest of Washington, DC. More urban and contemporary in design would be RiverPlace, located along the Willamette River in downtown Portland, Oregon. Other Traditional Neighborhood Development communities include Baldwin Park, built on an old Navy base in Orlando, and McKenzie Towne, opened in 1995 outside Calgary in Canada.

CELEBRATION

A Traditional Neighborhood Development project not designed by Duany and Plater-Zyberk that has received considerable attention is Celebration, built by the Walt Disney Company outside Orlando. Celebration is basically a reproduction of an old-fashioned Midwest town.[39] When homes in Celebration first opened for sale in 1995, people lined up for a one in ten chance to buy a home at a price more than one-third above the market price to live in a Disney community where many aspects of their lives would be controlled. The Disney Company, for instance, not only specified the color of the curtains residents could hang in their windows (white), but those who accepted a free phone and computer lived with a "Zeus Box" that monitored every phone call they made and every website they visited. Celebration is no longer owned by Disney. It definitely is not a community for those with average incomes. Home prices took a major hit during the housing recession, but there today are still numerous homes selling for over a million dollars. In one area Disney's plans failed. The company went to great affirmative-action lengths to encourage minorities in order to prevent Celebration from becoming racially homogeneous. However, Celebration is only one percent black and 6 percent Hispanic.[40]

Nor is everything quite what it seems in Celebration. For example, the town plays recorded bird songs through outside speakers since the local birds are not melodious enough. And at Christmas the town center is layered with artificial snow.

CREATING COMMUNITY

It is not the housing styles but the handling of autos that set New Urbanism and Traditional Neighborhood Developments apart from standard suburban designs. They reject most post–World War II suburbanization as nonfunctional for people. They strongly oppose the subdivision idea of curvilinear streets that discourage walking and feed all of a subdivision's traffic into a single access road. Rather than dead end cul-de-sacs, New Urbanism and TND communities are connected by traditional right-angle grids so there are multiple ways of getting somewhere.[41] This limits traffic on any one street. Streets in New Urbanism communities are deliberately kept narrow to discourage auto usage, and sidewalks are mandated to encourage walking. Typical suburban front-access garages are moved from the fronts of houses—where they look ugly, discourage walking, and prevent neighborhood interaction—to rear garages opening on rear alleys or service drives.

New Urbanism and TND communities are deliberately built to higher densities and with a mix of income levels, policies anathema to typical suburban developers. Houses may be large, but they occupy smaller lots than in typical suburbs. This is done to produce a community environment, encourage walking, and save space for numerous small parks and playgrounds. Homes are designed not to stand alone but to be part

of a community. For example, to encourage sociability, homes in Seaside are required to have shallow front lots and usable front porches.

Rather than the typical subdivision zoning, which segregates housing from commercial activities, Traditional Neighborhood Development communities are designed to encourage a mixture of people and activities in order to create lively streets. A mixture of housing types is encouraged, and small stores may even be found at corners. Strip-mall shopping centers are banned, as is the suburban practice of every shopping area having a large asphalt parking area in front for cars. Rather, shared parking lots are put behind the stores. New Urbanism towns are designed to project a strong pedestrian, user-friendly attitude. The design goal is to provide an inviting, livable, and walking public environment as well as secure and comfortable private home environments. As such, the New Urbanism derives some of its inspiration from the ideas of Jane Jacobs (see Box 13.1).

There are signs that some "smart growth" and New Urbanism ideas are taking hold. Suburban developers love cul-de-sacs because many of them sell quickly at a premium price, however, New Urbanism critics say they funnel cars into clogged arterial routes and restrict access of emergency vehicles. As previously noted, Virginia, as of 2009, required that all new subdivisions have "connectivity" to through streets, or the state won't provide maintenance or snowplow services.[42]

LIMITATIONS

Critics of the New Urbanism and Traditional Neighborhood Developments question whether suburbanites are willing to give up their subdivisions with wide lots for higher-density small towns. Architectural critics also say New Urbanism is nostalgic and unimaginative. After Hurricane Katrina the New Orleans neighborhood of Gentilly asked Andrés Duany to prepare a plan for rebuilding. He did so for free, but local planners objected saying the plan was backward looking.[43]

There is also the question of whether businesses in the downtown sections of Traditional Neighborhood Developments can compete economically with the strip malls and Wal-Marts just down the road. Will people be willing to reduce their reliance on autos? Nineteenth-century small-town residents had no choice but to shop locally. They couldn't hop in the car. Critics also point out that Seaside, for all its charm, is still more of a weekend retreat than a full-time community (although this is not true of most other New Urbanism developments). If developments such as Seaside remain primarily second homes for those able to afford them, the developments will only be homogenous elitist enclaves.

Underlying much of the criticism is the question of how much community design can affect behavior. Can communities be designed to encourage community living? Is Kentlands, for example, just a place that looks like Georgetown but is in actuality no different from other suburban subdivisions built off the Beltway? Is it simply a suburb in disguise, as some charge?[44]

A concern of New Urbanism advocates, as well as critics, is that the new communities with all their traditional charm will become just a niche market for affluent home buyers. If this occurs it will defeat the goal of providing complete and varied New Urbanism and TND communities for all who want to live there. For now, New Urbanism communities are spreading and becoming more popular.

SUMMARY

Ancient cities were rarely designed places. In Athens and Rome the central public areas were planned, but residential areas were not. Renaissance cities often were planned, sometimes in highly stylized fashion. The rebuilding of Paris in the 1860s is one of the most successful urban redesigns.

While North American cities as diverse as Quebec in the north and Savannah in the south were initially planned settlements, seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century American cities show minimal urban planning. Washington, DC, is the most noticeable exception, although Washington did not rediscover planning until the early twentieth century.

The "City Beautiful" movement developed out of Chicago's Columbian Exposition in 1893. The fair's use of a neoclassical or Beaux-Arts style captured the spirit of an imperialistic age and set the model for government buildings for half a century. Daniel Burnham created the master plan that Chicago still uses, and City Beautiful planning can be seen in Washington's Mall and federal buildings. Turn-of-the-century social reformers thought that by destroying city slums they would reform social behavior.

City planning from the 1920s to the 1970s emphasized civil engineering and making the city run more efficiently. The major land-use tool was zoning. Master plans created in this era were rarely implemented. Today most planning is more locally-based and socially responsive. Equity planners focus on the needs of less-powerful city residents. By increasing natural surveillance and defining boundaries between public and private space, crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) seems to decrease the opportunity for crime.

Europeans generally favor government urban planning, control of land, housing subsidies, and subsidized public transport. Stockholm controls three-quarters of the land within its boundaries and thus land-appreciation profits go to the municipality rather than speculators. Postwar emphasis on high-rise housing projects has been replaced with an emphasis on using subsidies to revitalize central-city housing. The Netherlands, having the highest population density in Europe, uses local and regional planning policies to stop sprawl and save open spaces near the city.

Ebenezer Howard founded the New Town movement in Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century. The new towns would be publicly owned, totally self-contained, residential and manufacturing units surrounded by a permanent green belt of open land. In addition to two early "garden city" or "green belt" towns initiated by Howard—Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City—the United States government built Greenbelt, Maryland; Greenhills s, Ohio; and Greendale, Wisconsin, as demonstration projects during the Depression. Following World War II the British government built some thirty-four new towns. European new towns, in contrast to those in Britain, are designed to be primarily residential places along mass transit lines. During the late 1960s Congress voted loan-guarantee funds for twelve private American new towns, but the funds were withdrawn in 1975 and the projects failed. After rough starts in the 1960s, the private new towns of Reston, Virginia, and Columbia, Maryland, are now prospering. Both are organized into neighborhoods of approximately nine hundred houses each with an elementary school, recreational center, and convenience store.

New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Development communities currently are much discussed. New Urbanism emphasizes keeping the scale of a small town, discouraging auto usage and curvilinear streets, providing open common areas, and encouraging walking. It rejects postwar suburban sub-developments as nonfunctional for residents. New Urbanism projects such as Seaside, Florida, and Kentlands, Maryland, have narrow streets and small residential lots that seek to reproduce the ethos of a small town. New Urbanism communities are growing in popularity, but at this point it is uncertain how much design can affect behavior.

KEY CONCEPTS

Greek and Roman Planning
Renaissance Cities
American Planning
Washington, DC
Planned Communities
Planned Parks
City Beautiful Movement
Tenement Reform
City Efficient
Zoning
Master Planning and Equity Planning
Crime Prevention By Design
European Planning
Land Control Policies
British New Town Movement
American New Towns
New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Developments
Designing Community

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the major differences between urban planning in Western Europe and the United States?
2. How were new nineteenth-century American cities laid out and why?

3. What was the focus of the City Beautiful movement, and from what event did it take its inspiration?
4. What was the City Efficient and what was its major planning tool?
5. What are the four conditions that Jane Jacobs said were indispensable to generating city liveliness?
6. How do the Dutch deal with the problem of urban sprawl and control of land?
7. What are the principles and planning practices underlying Howard's New Town movement?
8. What are the major American new towns and how are they spatially organized?
9. What are the basic tenets of "New Urbanism" community design?
10. How are New Urbanism and Traditional Neighborhood Development towns designed to create a sense of community, and how does this differ from traditional post-World War II suburbs?

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